



## Health impacts of floods

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**Author(s):** Du W, FitzGerald GJ, Clark M, Hou XY  
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### Abstract:

**INTRODUCTION:** Floods are the most common hazard to cause disasters and have led to extensive morbidity and mortality throughout the world. The impact of floods on the human community is related directly to the location and topography of the area, as well as human demographics and characteristics of the built environment. **OBJECTIVES:** The aim of this study is to identify the health impacts of disasters and the underlying causes of health impacts associated with floods. A conceptual framework is developed that may assist with the development of a rational and comprehensive approach to prevention, mitigation, and management. **METHODS:** This study involved an extensive literature review that located >500 references, which were analyzed to identify common themes, findings, and expert views. The findings then were distilled into common themes. **RESULTS:** The health impacts of floods are wide ranging, and depend on a number of factors. However, the health impacts of a particular flood are specific to the particular context. The immediate health impacts of floods include drowning, injuries, hypothermia, and animal bites. Health risks also are associated with the evacuation of patients, loss of health workers, and loss of health infrastructure including essential drugs and supplies. In the medium-term, infected wounds, complications of injury, poisoning, poor mental health, communicable diseases, and starvation are indirect effects of flooding. In the long-term, chronic disease, disability, poor mental health, and poverty-related diseases including malnutrition are the potential legacy. **CONCLUSIONS:** This article proposes a structured approach to the classification of the health impacts of floods and a conceptual framework that demonstrates the relationships between floods and the direct and indirect health consequences.

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### Resource Description

#### Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Extreme Weather Event

**Extreme Weather Event:** Flooding

#### Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Freshwater

#### Geographic Location:

# Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal



resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

## **Health Impact:**

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Injury, Malnutrition/Undernutrition, Mental Health/Stress

**Mental Health Effect/Stress:** Stress Disorder

## **Mitigation/Adaptation:**

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

**Population of Concern:** A focus of content

## **Population of Concern:**

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Low Socioeconomic Status

## **Resource Type:**

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

## **Timescale:**

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

## **Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:**

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content